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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General

The General Assembly, in its resolution 44/60 of 8 December 1989, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session a report on the activities of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Secretary-General hereby transmits to the Assembly the report prepared by the Institute on its programme activities.

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* A/46/150.

ANNEX

Report of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 44/60 of 8 December 1989, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-sixth session a report on the activities of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

2. In that resolution, the General Assembly, inter alia, expressed its satisfaction at the significance and scope of the activities of the Institute and at the special importance attached to research, training, information, documentation and communication activities relating to women and development in order to contribute to the designing of mainstream developmental policy; it requested the Institute to continue its research on the contribution of women to development, including the work of women in the informal sector of the economy, and the elaboration of special methodologies for the monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects for women and to intensify its efforts to apply innovative training strategies with a view to strengthening national training capabilities, particularly in developing countries; and commended the Institute for the priority it had assigned to cooperation with the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and welcomed the ongoing consultations between the regional commissions and the Institute with a view to launching parallel activities relating to women and development.

3. Since the last report of INSTRAW to the General Assembly (A/44/416), the Institute has reaffirmed its catalytic role in elaborating methodologies for carrying out research, training and information activities in new areas of interest affecting women and development, such as women, environment and sustainable development, women and communication for development, and country-specific research and training materials on rural women, including rural credit. Furthermore, INSTRAW continued to maintain and strengthen its specificity in areas of action such as statistics and indicators on women, including women's work in the informal sector, women and water supply and sanitation, and women and new and renewable sources of energy. Action was also taken within the Institute's long-term research programme on monitoring and evaluation methodologies for programmes and projects on women and development. A new orientation was given to its scholarship and internship programme and the production of training materials on women and development. The scope of the Institute's women in development studies curricula programme was widened and the Institute continued its research activities on choice and assessment of technology for mobilization of women in development.

4. INSTRAW research, training and information programmes continue to be closely interrelated, and the present report reflects some of the major results of its programme of activities since the last report of the Institute to the General Assembly.

II. MAJOR RESULTS OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE INSTITUTE

A. Statistics, indicators and data on women

1. Research

5. In its resolution 44/76 of 8 December 1989 entitled "Elderly women", the General Assembly invited INSTRAW and the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat to pay specific attention to older women in their efforts to improve methodology for data-gathering on women. Consultations were carried out with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat as well as with other United Nations bodies with a view to preparing a methodological study which would review the concepts and related methodological issues for data collection and analysis of elderly women. Five key areas were singled out:

(a) Position in family formation and households;

(b) Education level;

(c) Economic activity and labour force participation;

(d) Economic and social support; and

(e) Health and provision of health care.

6. Under each topic, relevant concepts and methods currently being applied in data collection and processing are reviewed within the context of the recent ageing phenomenon, particularly in developing societies. Specific examples of tabulations are provided and some general and specific indicators also recommended indicating data availability, sufficiency and accuracy in deriving such indicators. Where relevant and important, comparative analysis of some conceptual and methodological issues between the developed and the developing countries are highlighted in the technical report.

7. The draft technical report entitled "Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Elderly Women" was reviewed at a consultative meeting organized by INSTRAW in collaboration with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, held in New York from 28 to 30 May 1991. The meeting, in an in-depth appraisal of the technical report, made concrete suggestions for its revision prior to finalization as a United Nations publication.

2. Training

8. Responding to the continued need to sensitize producers and users of statistics of the inadequacy of current concepts and methods to reflect the full contribution, participation, status and role of women in society, the Institute maintained its efforts to foster a dialogue between producers and users of statistics and indicators, specially those involved in policy-making.

9. To this end, the Institute was involved in the organization of two workshops at the national level in Malaysia, from 5 to 9 November 1990, and in the Sudan, from 24 to 29 November 1990, and gave advisory services for the holding of two others in Puerto Rico from 3 to 5 October 1990 and Venezuela from 23 to 25 May 1991.

10. The objective of all these workshops was to initiate or strengthen the dialogue between producers and users of statistics on women and to generate or improve the use of statistics and indicators related to women and development, taking into account national and regional specificities. The workshops underlined that although the conventional statistical sources contain a wealth of information of relevance to the status and role of women in society, these data were often not compiled, available or published. The urgent need to develop an adequate set of indicators for women and development, which should include qualitative and quantitative aspects of the participation of women in the informal sector (including housework), in social activities such as in political and voluntary organizations and in non-formal education activities, was also emphasized. To this end, the workshops emphasized the need for national statistical offices in collaboration with all related agencies to undertake special surveys and develop appropriate guidelines for standardizing definitions, concepts and measurements related to women and development. These guidelines should be made available to the researchers, policy makers, planners and organizations concerned.

11. An evaluation component is an integral part of the workshops, and it has helped the Institute to assess the impact and the continued need for this type of training. The analysis of the evaluations indicates that gender sensitivity is still required, particularly on the part of the producers and collectors of data on critical issues relevant to women, and that ways and means should be explored to make unpublished information that could highlight gender inequalities and discrimination accessible in a user-friendly format for little or no cost.

3. Women's work in the informal sector

(a) Improving statistics on women in the informal sector

12. Since last reporting to the General Assembly, the Institute entered the third and final phase of programme activities related to the statistics component of the UNDP-funded project "Improving African Women's Role in the Informal Sector - Production and Management". The two documents Handbook on Methods of Compiling and Analysing Statistics on Women in the Informal Sector, in Industry, Trade and Services and Synthesis of Pilot Studies on Compilation of Statistics on Women in the Informal Sector in Industry, Trade and Services in Four African Countries were examined for the first time in 1990 at two regional workshops, one for English-speaking countries and the other for French-speaking countries in Africa. These workshops were attended by high level officials of national statistical services, statistics departments in ministries of planning and ministries of labour, research institutions and national women's machineries.

13. The workshops proposed detailed guidelines for the revision of the two documents to reflect the needs and realities of national situations and unanimously agreed that the revised Handbook and Synthesis would be useful tools for training and as reference documents for statisticians, researchers and specialists in the field of women and development.

14. A number of recommendations were made with respect to the importance of replicating the training workshops at the national level, which were envisaged for the four project countries in all the other African countries, and the need for a more concerted effort at regional and national levels to improve concepts and methods of data collection and the compilation of statistics on women's contribution in the informal sector. In this context, the workshops recommended that:

(a) African Governments should be sensitized to the need for the development of integrated statistics, including statistics on women, to help national planning efforts, and this should also be brought to the attention of the Conference of African Ministers of Economic Development and Planning;

(b) The Statistics Division of ECA should include informal sector statistics in its work programme, paying particular attention to the measurement of women's contribution in this sector and present to the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, the recommendation of the workshop that an ad hoc expert group should be set up to study the Handbook and make recommendations to national statistics offices for its use at national level;

(c) As follow-up to the project on women in the informal sector in industry, trade and services, national training workshops using the revised Handbook should be conducted in all African countries that did not participate in the current project.

15. Recognizing the important share of women's participation in production in the agricultural sector and the limitations of available statistical data, it was also highly recommended that a comparable handbook on the compilation of statistics on women in the informal sector in agriculture in Africa be prepared as a complement to the handbook on trade, industry and services.

16. Following the recommendations of these regional workshops the Handbook and Synthesis were revised and applied as a tool for training in May 1991, in the Gambia and Zambia. Two other workshops are scheduled to be held in August 1991 in Burkina Faso and the Congo.

17. The primary objectives of the national workshops are to sensitize participants to the need to integrate informal sector concerns into national planning and to train users and producers in how relevant statistics on the contribution of women and men to the informal sector can be compiled and analysed for improved policy formulation.

18. The workshops which were conducted in the Gambia and Zambia discussed both policy and statistical issues and made specific recommendations in both areas. From the policy perspective, the workshops considered it necessary to have a unit or department to handle issues related to the informal sector, and recommended that steps be taken to establish such a section or department in the ministry of industry and commerce. This unit, as part of its tasks, should review laws and regulations which affect the operations of informal sector business and propose policies aimed at enhancing the development of the sector.

19. The workshops also recommended that national informal sector surveys be conducted. The establishment of a data bank on women was also considered important for gender-sensitive policies. In order to improve the quality and availability of data on women in the informal sector it was crucial that a unified definition of the sector be adopted. To this end, the central statistics office should coordinate all statistical activities and standardize concepts and methods of data collection on the informal sector.

(b) Policy-design for women's work in the informal sector

20. INSTRAW's work on women in the informal sector has focused mainly on statistics. In an attempt to approach the policy aspect of the issue as an extension to the pioneering work of the Institute in promoting improved concepts and methods of data gathering on women's work in the informal sector of the economy and within the currently revised framework of the System of National Accounts (SNA), INSTRAW organized a consultative meeting on "Macro-economic Policy Analysis of Women's Participation in the Informal Sector" in Rome from 18 to 22 March 1991, with a financial contribution from the Government of Italy.

21. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss policies for providing support to women working in the informal sector, such as basic infrastructure, access to credit, education and training for income generation and its control by women for the benefit of their families. The meeting explored alternative policies, which is an indispensable step in improving the situation of women in the informal sector, and focused on three main topics: (a) an overview of the role of women in the informal sector; (b) problems and constraints in the informal sector; and (c) guidelines on policy design for women in the informal sector.

22. Recommendations that emerged from the discussions at the meeting addressed the basic issues related to monetary and fiscal policies, foreign exchange or export regulations and labour policies.

23. Recognizing the limitations of the current monetary and financial policies in meeting the requirements of women in the informal sector, the meeting suggested that special credit lines should be created through commercial banks and other financial institutions. The private sector, non-governmental organizations and funding agencies should be encouraged to mobilize their resources towards women's needs in the informal sector.

Regarding export or foreign exchange regulations, it was recommended that support for small producers faced with difficult demand conditions should be developed through: provision of incentives for export, reviewing and modifying, where appropriate, relevant regulations and procedures, and elimination of necessary paper work; and provision of alternative channels for marketing the goods produced by women. The meeting stressed that innovative measures should be explored to improve the labour conditions in the informal sector while maintaining the competitiveness of the sector. Furthermore, ways and means should be sought to extend the social security and insurance benefits of formal sector institutions to women working in the informal sector. Specific measures should be adopted to improve the working conditions of casual workers and the self-employed.

24. Under fiscal policy, the meeting recommended that a thorough review be made of the impact of expenditures and subsidies on women's status and role in the informal sector. Although aware that Governments are facing budgetary constraints, the meeting emphasized the need to consider the reallocation of budgetary resources to improve social services, particularly training, education, extension services, credit facilities and marketing assistance, which would alleviate women's burden of multiple responsibilities. A study to evaluate the impact of structural adjustment policies on the sector would also be useful.

25. Underlining the recommendations, the meeting strongly stressed the need to improve the collection and utilization of gender-disaggregated data for policy design and implementation.

26. Participating in the meeting were representatives from countries with successful or known experiences in approaching the needs and problems of the informal sector, individual experts and representatives of relevant United Nations agencies.

(c) INSTRAW and the regional commissions' collaborative project on women's involvement in the informal sector: a proposal for an interregional approach

27. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/60, in which the Assembly welcomed the ongoing consultations between the regional commissions and the Institute with a view to launching parallel activities relating to women and development, it was decided to develop a proposal for parallel implementation on women in the informal sector. At the meeting of the Executive Secretaries held in March 1991 at Vienna, the concept of parallel programming on this topic was presented by INSTRAW and endorsed by the regional commissions. However, given the current priorities and thrusts in the programmes of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), only the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) expressed willingness to collaborate with INSTRAW in the implementation of the project.

28. Consequently, the Institute prepared a consolidated proposal based on the various programme suggestions forwarded to INSTRAW by the regional commissions, as well as on the results of INSTRAW's work, both statistics and policy components, on women in the informal sector. Primarily, the project is aimed at evolving a systematic approach to integrating women in the national economies through the enhancement of their capabilities and at creating a favourable environment for the improvement of women's status in the informal sector.

29. The consolidated proposal has been forwarded to the regional commissions for comments and concrete suggestions for implementation during the biennium 1992-1993.

B. Global issues

1. Monitoring and evaluation methodologies for programmes and projects on women and development

30. Since last reporting to the General Assembly on actions taken in this long-term research programme related to monitoring and evaluation methodologies for programmes and projects on women and development, during the biennium 1990-1991 the study "The Women in Development Dimension in Evaluation Methodologies - A Survey of Approaches by the Organizations of the United Nations System" was revised based on the guidelines given by the Consultative Expert Group Meeting held in New York in November 1989. This revision was carried out through direct consultations with the relevant organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

31. Preliminary conclusions of the study indicate that most of the United Nations organizations have developed evaluation guidelines, although there are still some organizations that do not consider a women in development dimension in evaluation. However, the study indicates that there has been a positive response to the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and even those organizations which had not developed evaluation guidelines, had some type of strategy for integrating women into their programmes and projects. In general, the guidelines for the consideration of the women in development dimension in evaluation often had a drawback in that they failed to provide instructions on how to, for example, develop indicators to determine the effects or impact. In some cases it was found that despite the issuance of a women in development strategy and of procedures for its operationalization, there were instances of failure to apply the latter, especially where senior field managers were not actively supportive of women in development initiatives. An exception was that of UNIFEM and its Knowledge Bank, which could provide a model for replication by other organizations, although this system could be too costly and administratively demanding for some.

32. The study also provides some suggestions on improving current monitoring and evaluation practices. Given the relatively little experience in

evaluating field activities with a women in development perspective, in those cases where projects or aspects thereof have no relevance to women, perhaps it would be necessary for evaluators to explain why this is so and not merely pass over the issue. This would also counteract the observed tendency to discuss women's issues only when they are part of the project design. Another suggestion is that the composition of the evaluation missions should include at least one member who is familiar with women in development issues. Yet another proposal is the development of women in development country profiles containing baseline information on economic, social and relevant politico-legal aspects of the situation of women.

33. It is envisaged that this updated version of the study will be published by INSTRAW in late 1991.

2. Women, environment and sustainable development

34. INSTRAW's new programme on women, environment and sustainable development responds to the global concern for environmental issues. However, the Institute, since early 1982, through its sectoral programmes on women, water supply and sanitation and women and new and renewable sources of energy became involved in issues related to environment as these programmes included the promotion of sound environmental management. The new programme concentrates on gender as an important variable in environmental issues.

35. Women are the main, but largely neglected, environmental managers, especially in the developing countries. However, their health and livelihoods - and hence their ability to act as effective agents for conservation - are often destroyed by environmental degradation and by development and conservation projects whose designs fail to take into account the central role of women in environmental concerns.

36. The present research undertaken by the Institute underscores how women contribute to the ecosystem and is conceived in two phases. Phase one, which is now in its concluding stage, consists of a state-of-the-art review on women, environment and sustainable development and provides a theoretical framework on the issue. It also surveys actions and agents performing in the field and assesses what is to be done at policy and decision-making levels.

37. The research has looked at the different vantage points (deep ecology, social ecology, ecofeminism, alternative development, among others) from which women and environmental issues have been approached, how women relate to the environment, how they are affected by environmental degradation and what actions and solutions women are seeking. Preliminary results indicate that many perpectives coincide in the need to redefine development in terms that reflect sustainability, diversity of solutions, justice, equity, autonomy, self-reliance and peace. Phase two consists of the designing of methodologies for training on the subject.

38. Regional case studies are also being carried out in order to provide new data and a cross-cultural understanding of the diverse environmental conditions in different parts of the world, on how women are affected and what solutions are being taken by women and other sectors.

39. Based on the results of the research and case studies, the following public information and training materials will be prepared:

(a) A 10-minute sound-slide package on women, environment and sustainable development, to be ready by November 1991 for presentation at the Global Assembly of Women and the Environment convened by the United Nations Environment Programme's Senior Women's Advisory Group to take place at Miami from 4 to 8 November 1991;

(b) Preparation of a training Policy Development Resource Portfolio on Gender, Environment and Sustainable Development. The portfolio will be tested in a subregional workshop at Cairo in 1992 and will be presented at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Brazil, in June 1992;

(c) Publication of the first issue of INSTRAW Special Publications Series that will focus exclusively on the topic of Women, Environment and Sustainable Development. This new journal will be oriented for academics, policy makers and a general, informed audience. It will present the results of the research and contain an exhaustive bibliography;

(d) Preparation of a poster with the theme, "Stitching together we mend the future of our planet", for distribution at the Global Assembly of Women and the Environment to take place at Miami in November 1991 and at UNCED, in Brazil in June 1992.

40. INSTRAW is sponsoring three women from the Caribbean region, who are activists at the grass-roots level in ecological recuperation or conservation of the environment, to participate in the Global Assembly of Women and the Environment at Miami, in November 1991.

3. Communications materials for women and development

41. The role of communications in development is essential, and sustained research efforts are still needed in order to identify the possibilities and potentials of using communications technologies for women and development, taking into account women's requirements and participation and identifying and defining various types of communications support materials and the modalities of international cooperation that could help to achieve it.

42. As a follow-up to the Institute's international consultative meeting on communications for women in development, held in Rome in October 1988, INSTRAW, during the biennium 1990-1991, undertook research to gather information on existing communications systems and resources in three selected

countries of the Latin America and Caribbean region, namely Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic.

43. The potential of traditional/modern communications for the benefit of rural and urban women, as well as the role of women in communications as producers a..d workers, are also being looked at. Other elements to be examined are women's education in communications and through communications technologies, the effects of communications on women (as beneficiaries of technology, negative stereotyping, targets of consumer advertising) and the role of women in communications as agents of change.

44. The first participatory planning meeting of the institutions selected to participate in the project was held at INSTRAW headquarters from 11 to 14 February 1991. The objective of the meeting was to discuss INSTRAW's draft proposal for the project and to elaborate a research design that, while allowing for country specificities, would also provide comparative elements. The research design involves country profiles which include the elaboration of national inventories on communication resources and the situation of women in the communications systems of the three countries, looking at women as producers and receivers of communications in the conventional, alternative and traditional communication systems. Other aspects deemed important for research are the official government policies in communications, as well as the position of women with regard to training in the field of communications. An overview of the literature will also be made in order to review aspects already researched, such as the stereotype of women in the media.

45. Upon completion of the country profiles, national seminars will be held and country projects for the development of communications materials will be prepared. Following this, the production of specific communications materials will take place in 1992.

46. The project is a collaborative effort with AIDOS, the Italian Association for Women in Development, INSTRAW's focal point in that country, with specific funds from the Government of Italy.

4. Women's role in choice and assessment of technology

47. The Institute continues its involvement in undertaking research studies covering trends in women and technological development.

48. Currently, INSTRAW and the International Centre for Public Enterprises (ICPE) are collaborating on a joint project aimed at social impact analysis of investment and/or acquisition of technology in developing countries and the position of women. The research includes: (a) a state-of-the-art review and critical assessment of existing literature with special emphasis on the social impact of proposed technologies on women; (b) a review and assessment of evaluation methodologies of selected international financial agencies in order to identify existing approaches and apply them to current project planning and

evaluation procedures on investment and transfer of technology; (c) guidelines and check-lists of indicators on the social impact of technological acquisition and investment in developing countries with special reference to the position of women. The research study is to be completed by late 1991.

49. In 1990, INSTRAW published within its research series Women's Access to Technology: Myths and Realities, which contains the research results of the Institute's work done on the subject in previous bienniums.

C. Sectoral issues

50. An entire cluster of the INSTRAW programme of activities refers to policy design, training and information delivery in particular sectors of the economy. These activities enable the Institute to develop cooperative arrangements with institutions both within and outside the United Nations system that are active in these sectors of development.

51. Continued attention has been given to women, water supply and sanitation, and women and new and renewable sources of energy. In both areas, a system-wide cooperation is being applied, in particular with the Inter-secretariat Group for Water Resources of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the United Nations Steering Committee on Water Supply and Sanitation and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, with the participation of bilateral technical cooperation agencies.

52. Together with UNDP, INSTRAW provides secretariat services for the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Water Supply and Sanitation.

53. In the field of energy, INSTRAW participates actively in the meetings of the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy. At the ninth session of the Inter-Agency Group on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, held in New York in March/April 1990, INSTRAW was given the responsibility to be the lead agency on the theme "Women, New and Renewable Sources of Energy".

Water

54. In cooperation with the United Nations Department of Technical Cooperation for Development and International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training of the International Labour Organization (ILO/TURIN Centre), INSTRAW updated the multi-media training package on "Women, water supply and sanitation" in June 1991 which was originally prepared in 1986. The update followed the guiding principles adopted at the Global Consultation on Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990s held at New Delhi, India, in September 1990 and the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. The training package aims at promoting the integration of women's needs with participation in sustainable water supply and sanitation programmes, paying particular attention to training activities and to the management of water resources.

55. The multi-media modular training package on "Women, water supply and sanitation", consists of five modules, namely: The International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade and Beyond; Participation of women in planning, choice of technology and implementation of sustainable water supply and sanitation projects; Role of women in hygiene education and training activities for water supply and sanitation projects; Involvement of women in management of water resources, water supply and waste disposal; and Evaluation and monitoring of water supply and sanitation programmes and projects and the role of women. The training package is addressed to: senior officials of various health planning ministries; development planners and provincial authorities in charge of water supply and sanitation projects; engineers in charge of designing and implementing projects; and trainers and managers of national training institutes. The package contains 400 pages of training text, a user's guide, a trainer's guide, a lessons plan, additional reading, a bibliography, a key-issue check-list for group work and evaluation forms, and is supplemented by two sound-slide packages and 80 transparencies. Its production was funded by the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development.

56. The updated training package will be tested in a training seminar scheduled to be held in Banjul, the Gambia, in September 1991, organized by the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development in cooperation with the Government of the Gambia, with the participation of INSTRAW in resource capacity.

Energy

57. From 1989 to 1991, in cooperation with United Nations agencies and bodies and national counterparts, INSTRAW organized two national training seminars in Africa and two regional seminars for Africa to field test the INSTRAW/ILO/TURIN Centre training modules on "Women and new and renewable sources of energy". The seminars, with a total of more than 200 participants, were made possible by a grant from the Government of Italy. Furthermore, in cooperation with the International Centre for Public Enterprises in Developing Countries and the Center for Management and Labour Research, INSTRAW focal point in Yugoslavia, a Mediterranean training seminar was organized in September 1990 in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, where the modules were adapted for the Mediterranean countries. In addition, in cooperation with the International Energy Foundation (IEF) and the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy (ARCSE), institutions responsible for translating the training modules at no cost to the Institute and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), INSTRAW organized a regional training workshop for Arabic African countries in December 1990 in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In the host country of the Institute, INSTRAW, in cooperation with Dirección General para la Promoción de la Mujer, the Institute's focal point, organized a national training seminar in December 1990. The reports of all these training seminars were published by the Institute.

58. On the basis of the evaluation done by participants concerning methodology, content, curriculum design and different audio-visual support

materials, the training package on "Women and new and renewable sources of energy" has proven to be efficient and useful. The training methodology, based on a modular approach, is flexible and adaptable to different regions and target groups and lends to a multiplier effect.

59. INSTRAW, in cooperation with Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA), a non-governmental organization, is implementing a project on "Improving linkages between women and energy sector policies, programmes and projects with special reference to New and Renewable Sources of Energy" funded by the UNDP/Office for Project Services.

60. The project seeks to develop a systematic approach to integrating women fully into the mainstream of planning and programming for energy development by demonstrating through pilot projects how women can be drawn into participating fully in these sectoral issues. The project will also contribute to redirecting, refocusing and orchestrating the imperfectly coordinated efforts existing in different ministries, departments and agencies to secure the more efficient involvement of women in energy programmes and projects.

61. On the basis of extensive field visits, four countries were selected for the project, namely, Burkina Faso, Mali, Malawi and Zambia. INSTRAW has primary responsibility for project activities in Malawi and Zambia and VITA for Burkina Faso and Mali.

62. The expected output for the first year of the project includes a situational analysis, draft methodological approach, framework and plan operations for involving women more effectively in energy sectors activities, preparation of a national high-level consultative meeting and preparation of prototype training curricula.

63. Preparatory missions were undertaken to the two project countries to identify national experts to undertake a situational analysis, including a training needs assessment for women in the energy sector, underlining the constraints to women's involvement and contribution to short and long-term objectives of energy programmes in the country, and a methodological approach for involvement of women in the energy sector.

64. The situational analysis for Malawi and Zambia pointed out that most of the activities and projects conducted in the field of women in the energy sector focused primarily on stoves (charcoal, ceramic, mud). However, little or no research has been undertaken on the involvement of women in other new and renewable sources, such as biogas, biomass, mini-hydropower, solar energy, etc.

65. The major constraints to involving women more effectively at various levels in the energy sector, as indicated from the situational analysis for the two project countries, included lack of education, lack of participation or consultation of women in energy projects, energy projects that did not target women; lack of information and training; lack of involvement of women

in policy planning; finance; choice of technology, etc. In Malawi, cultural/social constraints, depending on patrilineal or matrilineal systems, were also highlighted.

66. It was suggested that energy issues be included in school curricula at various levels to increase awareness of energy matters; that women should be trained in specific subjects related to energy to ensure their participation at different levels. As well, the community attitudes and cultural/social values towards girls and women ought to be changed. In addition, training of various target groups, such as policy makers, planners (macro-micro levels), trainers and end-users, was strongly recommended.

Credit

67. Aware of the present cultural, economic and social constraints which limit rural women's access to credit from formal financial institutions in developing countries, INSTRAW concentrated its efforts on identifying those constraints, with a view to changing the prevailing trends of policy-making which tend to overlook women's needs.

68. In 1990, INSTRAW published in one volume all its previous research studies on women and credit. The volume includes research on topics such as women's inaccessibility to credit: problems and policies; credit opportunities for women of the developing world; women's access to land as an asset; an overview of the laws in 59 countries; increasing women's access to credit in Asia: achievements and limitations; women's access to credit in Latin America and the Caribbean; and women's access to credit in Africa.

69. In order to obtain in-depth information with the aim of elaborating adequate training material on women and rural credit, INSTRAW, jointly with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and in collaboration with the Mediterranean Institute of Management (MIM), organized an interregional training seminar on how to improve banking for rural women, held at Nicosia from 19 to 30 November 1990. The seminar's objective was to train participants, a total of 20, primarily from financial institutions, in ways and means of enhancing women's access to financial services. It was designed to acquaint participants with successful and replicable banking services for women, including banking policies, concepts, marketing systems and procedures. Action plans on women and financial services were prepared by the participants for submission to their respective institutions. Recommendations for improving rural women's access to credit were also formulated and targeted at governmental and institutional levels. The report of the seminar will be published by INSTRAW for wide distribution in late 1991.

70. As a follow-up to this interregional seminar, INSTRAW participated in a regional seminar on "Economic Progress of Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean" organized by IFAD with the collaboration of the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Cooperation (IICA) held at San José from 17 to 22 June 1991. The seminar addressed four main topics: (a) analysis of the economic role and needs of rural women in Latin America and the Caribbean;

(b) women's access to production-related extension and training services; (c) access to credit, financial organization and administration, systems and procedures; and (d) micro-enterprise as a means of integrating women into rural development projects.

71. Based on the recommendations of these seminars, the Institute envisages the preparation of appropriate training material as well as policy guidelines to redress the current obstacles encountered by rural women in their access to credit.

Gender in curricula and women in development packages

72. The INSTRAW Board of Trustees has underlined the importance of the training of academics and researchers on issues of gender and development, particularly in developing countries. As a response to this, one of the Institute's ongoing programmes concerns the integration of gender and development issues into university curricula. This has entailed carrying out regional surveys with the purpose of assessing the status of the field in different regions and preparing handbooks to help academics, especially in developing countries, to design women in development courses or integrate women in development issues into the mainstream.

73. Thus far, the U.S. Council for INSTRAW, INSTRAW's focal point in the United States, has cooperated with the Institute in the compilation of curricula from the United States, and the resulting handbook will be published by INSTRAW as a reference guide for professors both within and outside the United States.

74. The next phase of this programme involves the preparation of a series of regional handbooks. It is envisaged that each handbook will contain a section analysing the institutionalization process, strategies and status of this field of study in the region. It will also review the content of what is researched and taught in terms of topics, theoretical perspectives and socio-political motivations, and will provide sample syllabi, bibliographies and other teaching aids and resources as well as guidelines as to teaching methods and class dynamics.

75. Linked to the programme of developing prototype curricula on gender and development studies is the constant update of the content, form and target audience of the modular training package on women and development. During 1990-1991, the Institute carried out consultations to determine how the package could be most effective given the vast scope of the subject and the general nature of the information currently contained in the package. As a result, it was concluded that the training materials could be presented in several forms, depending upon the target audience, such as general public information brochures, policy reference guides and modular training packages. The data and information for the preparation of these materials would be based on the results of INSTRAW's research programmes, another example of the close interrelation between the Institute's research, training and information/communication programmes.

76. The Institute, through its scholarship and internship programme, seeks to familiarize scholars and individuals with women and development issues, as related to the Institute's main programmes and those of the United Nations system. Three short-term scholarships were offered to INSTRAW's focal points, one per region for a scholar or senior researcher who undertook work within the statistics, women in development issues and gender, environment and sustainable development programmes. Although INSTRAW receives an increasing number of applications for internships, owing to the Institute's restricted human resources that have to bear the supervisory tasks, the Institute is not in a position to accept more than 10 interns per year.

D. Networking

77. INSTRAW has continued to develop innovative approaches in carrying out its programmes. Through networking, the Institute has been able to increase the scope of its operations, obtain optimum use of its limited financial resources and a greater outreach and impact of its work. Several activities, such as the organization of seminars and meetings related to its programmes, have been implemented during the 1990-1991 biennium in collaboration with focal points, regional commissions, United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and women's organizations and groups.

78. Particular attention is given to networking with the bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as well as with regional groupings such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the League of Arab States (LAS), Sistema Económico Latinoamericano (SELA), and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Cooperation with the United Nations research and training institutes was also maintained and could be considerably enhanced if financial constraints were overcome.

79. A second consultative meeting between the regional commissions and INSTRAW took place in February 1990 with a view to further strengthening the existing cooperation between the Institute and the regional commissions and coordinating parallel programming. To this end, INSTRAW was invited for the first time to attend the Executive Secretaries meeting which took place in Vienna in March 1991 when the implementation of parallel programming between the regional commissions and INSTRAW on women's involvement in the informal sector was endorsed. Cooperation with the regional commissions also includes joint implementation of research programmes on women and development, organization of training workshops and seminars, convening of regional meetings and information exchange.

80. New forms of collaboration are being sought for increased interaction between INSTRAW and its focal points at the national level which could be mutually beneficial to both INSTRAW and the focal points. Promoting the organization of joint programme activities with and among its focal points with a view to building and strengthening networking activities at the

national and regional levels is encouraged, thus strengthening cooperation and attaining a more effective outreach of INSTRAW's work programme at regional and national levels. Focal points also represent INSTRAW at conferences, seminars and other events, thus ensuring the Institute's presence with minimal cost to the Institute. Furthermore, focal points have assisted in identifying national priorities for women and development and have helped to publicize INSTRAW's work in their countries and secure financial support for the Institute's activities. Until the present biennium, the focal points were established on an experimental basis. However, at the eleventh session of INSTRAW Board of Trustees in February 1991, it was unanimously agreed that the impact of INSTRAW's work was most effective when its training and research activities were integrated within the mainstream of development at regional and national levels. The Board therefore considered ways of strengthening and maintaining a more dynamic relationship with INSTRAW national focal points as an essential part of the Institute's outreach strategy at the regional and national levels, which is to be gradually implemented starting from the 1992-1993 biennium.

81. The network of INSTRAW, however, goes far beyond the designated focal points to encompass non-governmental organizations and women's organizations worldwide. The expertise of these organizations on specific issues can be tapped and through their contacts the Institute's reach can be widened. Wherever possible, INSTRAW is establishing cooperative and working arrangements with women's research centres and networks. This has facilitated a greater interaction between grass-roots experience and policy-making and has made the expertise and contacts acquired by INSTRAW through its global activities on women and development easily accessible to activist non-governmental organizations working at the international, national and local levels.

82. INSTRAW News is the main channel of information exchange of the Institute with its networks. It continues to be the Institute's principal means not only of diffusing information about the major results of INSTRAW programme activities but also to record research trends and promote global networking on women and development issues. Although there is growing and sustained interest in INSTRAW News, which is widely distributed and used by universities, research institutions, organizations within and outside the United Nations system, individual researchers, and non-governmental organizations, due to budgetary constraints, the same print run of 14,500 has been maintained. It is published biannually in English, French and Spanish.

83. To ensure an efficient information flow, the Institute on a regular basis updates its computerized mailing list, rosters of institutions and experts and bibliographies and produces relevant public information material, including posters and flyers, that would reach both the general public and the development community. The underlying principle of the Institute's public information programme is to promote an understanding of the Institute's programme activities and its objectives, as well as of women and development issues in general.

84. Networking and mainstreaming have been and continue to be the main pivots of INSTRAW'S mode of operation. It has proved to be a cost-effective, mutually supportive and enriching form of interaction for all cooperating bodies. It has enabled the Institute, despite its limited financial resources, to carry out its mandate in research, training and information on women and development in an innovative and multidisciplinary manner. Cognizant of the enormous potential for innovation that networking and mainstreaming offer, the Institute seeks new ways and strategies to strengthen its mode of operation.

E. Administrative and financial matters

85. INSTRAW is funded solely on voluntary contributions. Since its establishment the Institute has received pledges from 66 Member States, both from developed and developing countries. Voluntary contributions received by the Trust Fund for the biennium 1990-1991 as of the date of this report, including specific contributions for special projects and programmes, amount to $US 2,713,461. This amount is expected to increase before the end of the biennium through additional contributions to be received from those donor countries that pledged but which have not yet paid contributions.

86. The Institute wishes to express its appeciation to those Member States which have steadily supported INSTRAW by their contributions to the Trust Fund since its inception, as well as to those which have joined them more recently.

87. In this context, fund-raising efforts remain a crucial element in the Institute's work and continues to be a priority issue. Contacts with major donor Governments are essential in order to secure the level of contributions needed by the Institute to ensure its stability and the continuity of its research, training and information programmes, as approved by the Board of Trustees, and particularly taking into account the growing interest of Member States in issues relevant to women and development.

88. In addition to the regular voluntary contributions from Member States, the Institute has received extrabudgetary resources from United Nations agencies to carry out the implementation of specific research and training components of projects executed by those agencies, in particular the Economic Commission for Africa and the Office of Project Services of UNDP. Funds received in this regard were entirely used to implement fully the programmes, including a modest percentage of support cost for the Institute to meet related costs of projects operations. Through this modality, INSTRAW continues its cooperation with other bodies of the United Nations system by providing its expertise in the field of women and development at a low cost for the agencies concerned.

89. As an autonomous institution, INSTRAW is fully responsible for providing administrative support to all its programmes. This includes financial management and budgetary controls, monitoring of financial commitments, recruitment and personnel administration, procurement and other activities, within the delegation of authority granted by the Secretary-General.

90. During the period reported, INSTRAW completed the implementation of the computerized accounting system which has enabled the Institute to process the recording of its transactions in a timely manner and to produce the financial reports that INSTRAW sends on a monthly basis to the Accounts Division of the United Nations Secretariat. Likewise, a new computerized personnel and payroll system was introduced in the biennium 1990-1991.

91. In view of the importance of and need for research, training and information activities related to women and development, which is a prerequisite not only for the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies but also for the improvement of women's position and status in society, the firm support of Member States for the work of INSTRAW is crucial.

F. Conclusion

92. The changing developmental context of the 1990s calls for more research, more training and more information to acknowledge women's essential contribution to development and to bridge the existing gap between the position of women and current development practices. Convinced that the human factor and especially the crucial role of women as active participants and partners in development is of fundamental importance to restoring sustainable development with growth, equity, justice and peace, INSTRAW continues to advocate a change in current developmental thinking by introducing innovative and new systems of conceptual analysis and research, data collection and training methodologies which reflect women's actual and potential contribution to mainstream development.

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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

Rotation of staff within the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, entitled "Rotation of staff within the United Nations" (JIU/REP/91/3).

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* A/46/150.

ANNEX

JIU/REP/91/3
Geneva, June 1991

REPORT ON THE ROTATION OF STAFF WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS

Prepared by
Raúl A. Quijano

Joint Inspection Unit

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff rotation is essential to the United Nations system in order to provide effective technical co-operation programmes to its Member States in the developing countries. The need to institute a mobility programme in the United Nations system has been repeatedly expressed by the General Assembly, since 1958 in Resolution 1294 (XIII). The issue of mobility/rotation has been raised and discussed continuously since then by the General Assembly and the international Civil Service Commission (ICSC), mostly in the context of career development, as well as at a number of Staff-Management Co-ordination Committee (SMCC) sessions. The Joint Inspection Unit, in response to a request made by one of the five regional commissions to examine how best an equitable rotation system could be established, undertook the study to assist the Secretariats in their efforts to establish a formal rotation policy. Chapter I provides the rationale for the study and the methods used.

Chapter II discusses the need for staff rotation and the problems encountered. The inadequate incentives provided to staff members compounded by the lack of an official rotation policy make it difficult to assign staff to hardship duty stations.

Chapter III reviews staff rotation between duty stations and occupation groups and its impact on career development. The report emphasizes that to the extent possible rotation should be linked to career development so that staff are motivated to accept assignments to different duty stations, in particular to hardship duty stations. The need to rotate staff by the Secretariat is limited to some specialized areas and those areas should be identified and posts earmarked for rotation.

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In Chapter IV the report discusses United Nations organizations which have special policies on mobility and rotation of staff. The organizations cited are UNDP, UNICEF and UNHCR which are basically field oriented and staff rotation has been integrated into their personnel policies.

In Chapter V the Inspector concludes that the United Nations Secretariat in particular the Regional Commissions will be handled better if a formal personnel policy that included a high factor of mobility, similar to those applied by UNDP, UNICEF and UNHCR is established. He has made five recommendations which he believes will help to expedite the process of Staff Rotation Plan being prepared by the Secretariat.

I. INTRODUCTION

1 . United Nations Staff Regulation 1.2 states "Staff members are subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to the assignment by him to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations...". Because this regulation has not been backed by a corresponding personnel policy on re-assignment, staff rotation has been carried out on an ad-hoc basis, resulting in some cases in high vacancy rates, an uneven distribution of staff in certain occupational groups as well as between Headquarters and the field (see paragraph 16). Most important of all, staff rotation is carried out without regard to career development. The effect of this has been to erode the morale of staff members who have been assigned to hardship duty stations for periods longer than might be considered reasonable.

2 . The present study was prompted by the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) which requested JIU to examine the rates of vacancies within the framework of an effective staff rotation system for the United Nations. However, in the course of the analysis, other important issues emerged such as hardship conditions at regional duty stations, the linkage between the vacancy situation and staff rotation, as well as that between staff rotation and career development. Therefore, as the report progressed, it acquired new dimensions.

3 . In preparing the study, the Inspector has consulted previous JIU reports on vacancy problems of the Commissions and similar studies by other organizations and the United Nations Secretariat. His proposals take into account the experience of UNDP, UNICEF and UNHCR who have already integrated staff rotation into their personnel policy. The Inspector is grateful to all those who have contributed to the study.

II. THE NEED FOR STAFF ROTATION AND THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

4 . During the initial years of the United Nations, the number of field offices, the level of budgetary expenditure, as well as the range of activities were limited and the Secretariat was not oriented towards operational activities. Today, the United Nations has 159 Member States accounting for about 98 per cent of the world's population. It has 15 autonomous organizations affiliated to its programmes, employing nearly 20,000 professionals. Its current biennial budget (1990-1991) is about US$1.6 billion for the regular budget and some US$2.5 billion for programmes financed from extrabudgetary sources. The role of the Secretariat has expanded to include many economic, social and humanitarian programmes and the responsibilities of its staff have also increased. To implement these vast and diversified programmes, it has become necessary to move more staff to the field, and the need for staff rotation thus assumes an important position in the management of human resources.

5 . In its report on ESCWA (JIU/REP/89/1) the JIU recommended that the Secretary-General should "take the opportunity of the Vacancy Management and Staff Redeployment Programme to enforce with greater resolve staff regulation 1.2. and establish a systematic rotation of staff.".

6 . A high vacancy rate had been observed in the Regional Commissions for a long period causing concern not only to the Secretariat but to Member States as well. The Joint Inspection Unit in its 1982 report on the Economic Commission for Africa (JIU/REP/82/1) and in the 1989 report on the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (JIU/REP/89/1) had studied the problem in detail and made several suggestions to improve the situation. The present study takes into account the changing nature of the problem in its wider context.

7 . The vacancy problem was aggravated during the period 1986-1989 by the financial crisis and the decisions of the General Assembly to reduce posts in the Professional category by 15 per cent, which required an internal reorganization and redistribution of functions and services.

8 . The United Nations Secretariat initiated the Vacancy Management and Staff Redeployment Programame in 1986 in order to identify vacant posts Secretariat-wide and redeploy staff to cope with the financial crisis and at the same time to improve mobility. However, the programme has not proved adequate to deal with the mobility problem particularly with respect to redeployment of Headquarters staff. The regional economic commissions claim that they have lost staff to Headquarters rather than gained. On the other hand, statistics provided by Headquarters indicate that, with the exception of ECA, all four regional commissions had a net gain of one or two staff members for the period from 1987 to date (See Table 1 on page 19).

A. Vacancy situation at the regional level

9 . During the consultations held by the Inspector with the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions in July 1990, they all observed that the recruitment freeze affected the commissions because it made it difficult to bring in new people and, in addition, the requirement that recruitment to all Professional posts had to be approved by Headquarters contributed to considerable delays in filling vacant posts.

10 . Even before the financial crisis, vacant posts in the regional commissions tended to take longer to fill than in the other offices of the Secretariat. The minimum time needed to recruit a Professional staff member ranges from 6 to 12 months, at present.

11 . The vacancy rates have decreased only recently (see table 2) when Vacancy Management and Staff Redeployment functions for posts at the P-2 to P-4 levels were decentralized to duty stations for all vacancies announced on or after 1 February 1990, thus enabling them to recruit up to P-4 level without Headquarters' approval.

12 . The Secretariat has also granted, on a limited basis, permission to the regional commissions to recruit staff for short-term assignments of up to 11 months. This measure has been appreciated by the regional commissions since it allows them to continue their activities while waiting for an appropriate candidate to be identified through the Vacancy Management Programme or to be recruited externally.

13 . According to information provided by the Secretariat the vacancy rates at regional commissions in 1990 varied from a low 1.5 per cent for ECE to a high 13.5 per cent for ECA (ECLAC 2.6 per cent, ESCWA 5.6 per cent and ESCAP 7.1 per cent).

14 . These vacancy rates, therefore, concur, with the information which the Executive Secretaries provided to the Inspector and they confirm that the commissions now receive adequate candidates both in quality and number for each advertised post and that, with the exception of ECA, vacancy rates in regional commissions have decreased since 1988 drastically. In previous years, however, the situation was different as vacancy rates were very high reaching 29.6 per cent in ESCWA in 1987 (see Table 2). Because of political developments in the region, it is difficult to predict whether or not the vacancy situation of ESCWA will improve. As regards ECA, the Secretariat had even expected the vacancy rate for 1991 to fall to below 10 per cent after the statistics were updated.

15 . In general, the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions feel that, although the vacancy situation has improved, the planned development of a systematic rotation programme is still essential to equip the regional commissions with highly qualified experts, to provide equal opportunities and to assist staff members to obtain experience at Headquarters and in the field.

16 . Statistics provided by the Secretariat indicate that the distribution of staff among the regional commissions and Headquarters in areas such as electronic data processing (EDP), legal (LEG), library (LIB) Politics (POL), and publication (PUB) is inequitable, since more than 95 per cent of the staff are assigned to New York, Geneva, and Vienna (see Table 3 on page 21). On the other hand, Table 4 (see page 21) shows a more equitable distribution of staff in other fields such as administration (ADM), economics (ECO), engineering (ENG), finance (FIN), language (LNG), information (INF), science (SCI), social (SOC), and statistics (STC). The Secretariat has informed the Inspector that the Recruitment and Placement Division has started

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work on a computerized roster of vacant posts and eligible candidates to fill them. This will assist in comparing the existing number of posts in occupational groups, both at Headquarters and at regional level, to determine absorptive capacity for effective rotation in appropriate situations.

17 . The Inspector considers necessary the need for a systematic appraisal of post requirements in the regional commissions and Headquarters for the occupational groups listed above in order to find ways and means of establishing an effective rotation system. Occupational groups that already have an even distribution (see Table 4), such as Economics, Administration, etc., are expected to cause less problems in staff rotation. The Office of Human Resources Management is currently engaged in formulating a policy with a view to establishing an equitable staff rotation system.

18 . The Inspector welcomes this effort by the Office of Human Resources Management, since he strongly believes that the development of a clear policy in this matter for the appropriate job categories of the Secretariat and the regional commissions is an essential step in carrying out effectively the vast and diversified programmes of the United Nations.

B. Hardship conditions at regional duty stations

19 . Most regional commissions of the United Nations are located in developing countries, except the Economic Commission for Europe which is in Geneva. Because of the level of development of these countries, health, education, housing and recreation facilities are not comparable to facilities available elsewhere. Climatic conditions are at times difficult for some staff and their families to adapt to. A time frame, which is neither too short for adjustment nor too long to tolerate the hardship conditions in such duty stations, seems to be in great demand.

20 . For field personnel, attempts have been made by the United Nations organizations to classify the different duty stations based on prevailing conditions in the countries concerned.

Assignments to duty stations classified as "very difficult" are for two years. In those classified as "difficult", the duration is three years. In "normal" stations, assignments are for four years. These classifications are followed by all agencies with some modification depending on the needs of the organizations. ICSC, in classifying the different duty stations, has consulted Member States who also approve of staff members' special conditions and privileges.

21 . In its Resolution 44/30, the General Assembly approved an important number of measures and incentives for staff serving in hardship areas. In addition, however, the Inspector believes measures can be taken to encourage staff members to accept assignments to the regional commissions. Taking into account the particular needs and specific requirements of the commissions for highly qualified staff, and the need for staff members to acquire both Headquarters and field experience, the Secretariat might consider the following measures to further strengthen the existing incentive policies:

a) Staff members assigned to the field from Headquarters should be granted a Special Post Allowance (SPA) immediately instead of at the end of the usual waiting period of six months;

b) Once a staff member is selected to fill a higher post in a "difficult" or "very difficult" duty station, he/she should be promoted after six months if he/she has met all the requirements mentioned in his/her letter of appointment;

c) The effects and results of the incentives approved by the General Assembly should be reviewed periodically, and adjusted accordingly.

22 . The United Nations has some fragmented personnel regulations on mobility. The Vacancy Management and Staff Redeployment Programme, which is one of the tools used to rotate staff, cannot be a substitute for a rational staff rotation system since it was introduced basically to deal with the recruitment freeze and prevent disruption of programmes. It has been four years since this Programme has been in operation and a review seems in order, to determine the degree of its success and its future applicability.

III. STAFF ROTATION BETWEEN DUTY STATIONS AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

23 . In considering mobility and rotation it is necessary to study some factors which have negative effects and thus require appropriate answers. At present, a distinction is made between staff assignment and staff transfer. When a staff member is assigned to another duty station for a period of one year or less he is on loan and the releasing organization has the responsibility to absorb the staff member upon his return. However, when a staff member is transferred from one duty station to another, the releasing department has no obligation to accept the staff member back in his previous service. Staff members on transfer have no guarantee that they will return to a suitable job at Headquarters or other duty stations. Assigning staff for a fixed period of time, perhaps a maximum of four years and with the assurance that they will find a job upon their return, can mitigate the problem of the absence of a systematic rotation policy.

24 . Because of lack of defined policy, staff members feel rotation decisions in some cases are subjective rather than objective and personal rather than professional, thus compounding already existing financial , family and social problems. Financial problems are encountered because post adjustments are usually lower in the field than at Headquarters. Problems concerning the family occur because of children's education and loss of jobs by spouses, and social problems due to a change of environment. These different elements could make the movement of staff to or from different duty stations unattractive.

25 . For the above-mentioned reasons, the procedure of transferring staff from one duty station to another needs to be carefully reviewed by the Office of Human Resources and Management as to its advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis the Organization and the individual staff members concerned. Caution should be exercised to avoid rotation for its own sake and to ensure that human resources are used in the most effective manner.

26 . The Inspector sees, even in this respect, the necessity for establishing a comprehensive and formal policy, which will enforce and strengthen Staff Regulation 1.2 and, at the same time, promote career development plans. This idea was already stressed by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations which stated in their recommendation 49 that "A job

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rotation system among the various duty stations should be developed for staff members in the professional category as part of the career development plans."

27 . The Secretariat may identify, assuming the process is not yet completed, a list of specific types of posts for rotation purposes. These posts should fall in one of the three categories: (a) identical occupational groups; (b) similar occupational groups; and (c) related occupational groups. These broad occupational categories would allow for greater mobility within each group between Headquarters and regional staff.

28 . After the posts for rotation have been identified, profiles should be made of professional staff in the same occupational groups, taking into account length of service at the same duty station, qualifications, language ability, etc. on a Secretariat-wide basis. Staff members at Headquarters duty stations performing the same tasks as those in duty stations away from Headquarters could be assigned to these duty stations. Their counterparts in the duty stations could then be considered for transfer to Headquarters.

29 . Through the Vacancy Management Plan, these vacant posts for rotation should be brought to the attention of staff members who are outside the occupational group so as to give opportunity to all. However, staff members outside the occupational groups should be considered only in cases where qualified candidates are not available from within the occupational groups.

30 . The identification of posts, if properly designed and executed, will expedite matching them with eligible and available candidates, thus improving the rotation process. It will also facilitate administrative decisions such as recruitment and promotion operations, these being the most time-consuming responsibilities of the Office of Human Resources Management.

31 . If further investigation justifies it, a unit within the Office of Human Resources Management with appropriate personnel and financial allocation, should be responsible for managing and implementing the policy governing rotation. The Unit's terms of reference should form part of the Administrative Manual.

32 . All offers or appointment letters should incorporate very precise clauses which stipulate rotation as part of the terms and conditions of employment. It is assumed that the provisions of the relevant Staff Rules may be amended to reflect such changes in the conditions of employment.

A. Staff rotation and career development

33 . Staff rotation is often associated with promotion, a concept particularly prevalent among the staff. Previous studies and recommendations may be responsible for such expectations. The General Assembly, in its resolution 33/143 in 1978, stated that "Professional staff of the United Nations should be encouraged to work at more than one duty station and satisfactory performance during such tours of duty should be considered an additional positive factor in evaluating them for promotion.".

34 . In the same year, the Secretary-General established the first Career Development Committee (CDC) for staff in one occupational group (Public Information). The Committee had the function of advising, among other things, on:

> "Regular review of the staff in the group with regard to the training and reassignment that would be most conducive to the development of the career of each member of the group in the interest of the Organization and of the staff concerned."

35 . In 1979, the ICSC stated that career development programmes facilitate staff mobility both between organizations and within organizations, and between different duty stations by planning assignments well in advance to avoid some of the obstacles which arise when staff are required to move at short notice (A/34/30, para. 214(c).

36 . The Chairman of CCAQ, in presenting the view of the United Nations organizations in the 1989 ICSC report has stated that "in the view of the organizations, the most effective motivating force was an adequate process of career progression and promotion.".

37 . The Inspector recognizes that, with a very strict post classification system, the movement of staff constitutes an important factor in career development. More and more, promotion has involved movement to another post which, in many cases, means moving to another duty station. At the recruitment stage, therefore, it is essential to verify that individuals applying for positions not only possess the right qualifications but are also willing to accept diverse assignments and serve in different duty stations. It is only then that career development can be an integral part of the management of human resources development.

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38 . Further, the Inspector wishes to recall the JIU proposal of 1978 (JIU/REP/78/4) in which it was recommended that staff rotation should be related to promotion possibilities especially for those professional staff members who devote a considerable part of their lives to the service of the United Nations.

B. Rotation of staff of the regional commissions

39 . The five regional economic commissions, as the main economic and development focal points for their respective regions, require specialists for their diversified programmes dealing with development policy and practices, research, co-ordination, management of technical co-operation activities, and other substantive and administrative functions. In order to provide the expert assistance expected of them by the developing countries, regional staff need to upgrade continuously their professional standards by benefitting from the wealth of accumulated experience of both Headquarters and field operations. Therefore, a staff rotation system which will facilitate this mobility should, in general, work to the benefit of both the commissions and staff.

40 . However, movement between Headquarters and the regional commissions has not always worked to the benefit of the Commissions. The JIU report on the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), (JIU/REP/82/1) issued in 1982, stated that "while transfers out of ECA to other United Nations organizations amounted to almost half of the separations during 1977-1978 period, there appeared to be very few transfers, secondments, or assignments of other United Nations staff to ECA, except for some translators.". Another JIU report, on the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (JIU/REP/89/1), concluded that "A high rate of staff turnover due to unsettling conditions in the region, taken together with the normally high vacancy rate, has made the management of human resources in ESCWA one of the more critical problems with which the Administration has had to deal.".

41 . These statements point to the fact that the movement of staff between Headquarters and regional commissions as conducted today is inadequate and requires more concrete policy definition. In this context, the fact that the regional commissions draw 75 per cent of their staff from their respective regions and the special features of their programmes should not be overlooked.

42 . The general conclusion is that rotating staff members from Headquarters to the field and vice versa is a necessity, in particular for the regional commissions. A framework for a sound rotation policy and an implementation mechanism must, therefore, be designed; recruitment procedures and employment contracts being adjusted accordingly.

IV. UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS WITH STAFF ROTATION SYSTEMS

43 . The Inspector has exchanged ideas with various organizations, in particular, UNDP, UNICEF, and UNHCR, which have special policies on the mobility and rotation of staff. Staff rotation requirements differ from one organization to another, depending on the nature of their programmes and mandates given to them by Member States. For organizations such as UNDP, UNICEF, and UNHCR, which are basically field-oriented, staff rotation is essential and has been integrated into their personnel policies.

A. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

44 . In UNDP, rotation is based on a personnel plan drawn up in consultation with the different Bureaux and Divisions, whereby staff members due for rotation within the following 6 to 12 months are matched against the vacancies projected for the specific period. Initial consideration includes the options the staff member has communicated to the Personnel Division five months before the planned reassignment date, the tasks and responsibilities, the choice of duty station, the proposed time for the move and the duration of assignment.

45 . After staff members have indicated their preferences, the Personnel Division prepares a draft reassignment plan taking into account the staff's preference which is discussed with the Bureau or Division concerned. Once consultation between all the parties concerned is completed, the plan is reviewed and approved by the Administration. After decisions are taken, staff members are advised by the Division of Personnel. An effort is made to provide staff members with five months' notice.

46 . It is the policy of UNDP that in the course of their career, staff members should serve not more than twice in duty stations that are classified as "very difficult".

47 . UNDP is currently in the process of finalizing a revised process which would initiate the issuance, 12-18 months ahead of time, of a compendium of all posts becoming available the following year. A questionnaire designed to ascertain the interests of the staff member would be circulated to all staff due to be reassigned in the coming year. Decisions would then be taken by Management - taking into account the preferences of the staff member.

B. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

48 . UNHCR has three categories of duty station each with a specific duration of time known as the Standard Assignment Length (SAL): Category I "Normal" duty stations with four years' assignment; Category II "Difficult" duty stations three years; and Category III "very difficult" two years. The Appointments, Promotion and Posting Board makes recommendations for filling all vacancies at levels P-1 to D-1 inclusive. The allocation of duty stations to categories is subject to an annual review by the Personnel Service in consultation with the regional bureau concerned.

49 . In principle, staff members serving at a duty station are expected to rotate to another duty station when their SAL has expired. Staff members are also expected to undertake at least one assignment at Headquarters in the course of their careers. The Personnel Division keeps a roster of all posts from P-1 to D-1 indicating the date at which each post is expected to become vacant. A compendium of all vacant posts and those expected to fall vacant during a given period of not less than four but not more than six months as a result of expiration of the Standard Assignment Length (SAL), are advertised approximately six months before the commencement of the period in question. Staff members may apply for up to five vacancies, but must apply for a minimum of three in order of preference with an indication of any special considerations they wish to bring to the attention of the Board.

50 . The regulations of the Appointments, Promotion, and Posting Board issued in 1985, state that "The Board may consider individual exceptions to the requirements of rotation. Staff members who believe they have valid and compelling reasons for being unavailable for transfer from one duty station to another, for service at a particular duty station or for assignment to the field for the full period of a standard assignment shall state their case in writing to the Board. The Board will determine whether the reasons amount to adequate justification in each case and will advise Personnel Services of its decision, stating the length of the period of exemption from rotation, if any, to be granted subject to the review of the High Commissioner, the determination of the Board will be final.".

/...

C. UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

51 . The assignment of UNICEF staff is determined according to the programme needs of the Organization and the length of service at a particular duty station. Tours of duty are classified as: three years for "very difficult" duty stations; four years for "difficult" duty stations; and five years for "normal" duty stations. Assignment also takes into account the career development and personal circumstances of staff members. Access to posts up to the P-6 level (excluding Representative posts) is on a competitive basis whereby posts are advertised internally in order that qualified staff may request consideration for reassignment. Consecutive assignments to "very difficult" duty stations will not normally be made except at the request of the staff member.

52 . Having regard to tour of duty requirements, a list of staff for reassignment is drawn up each year in consultation with the offices concerned, and comprises the regular placement exercise.

53 . In order to prevent excessive movement of staff and consequent lack of continuity, staff will not be eligible for reassignment until one year prior to their due date for rotation, i.e. after having satisfied the tour of duty requirement for the particular duty station.

54 . UNICEF has a system whereby a periodic "rotation review" is held on a biennial basis depending on the Organization's needs. This is in addition to the ongoing regular reassignment process. A Special Vacancy Bulletin is distributed only to those staff members who are due for rotation. A special rotation questionnaire is completed by staff members in which they provide information concerning their career aspirations and their reassignment choices in order of preference. The review process also benefits from input from the staff member's supervisor, whose views are also indicated on the questionnaire.

55 . To facilitate exchange of experience, re-assignment can be: (i) between regions; (ii) between duty stations in the same region; (iii) between Headquarters and the field; and (iv) transfer between functions in both Headquarters and the field.

56 . While internationally recruited staff administered under the 200 series of the United Nations Staff Rules are not subject to this reassignment policy since they are recruited for a specific project post, they are considered to provide an important source of recruitment for other project and regular posts and, as such, are included in the rotation review.

57 . In cases where one UNICEF staff member is married to another, efforts are made to accommodate both partners in their respective careers in the same duty station, ensuring that there is no direct reporting relationship. Should UNICEF not be able to accommodate both spouses, efforts are made to secure placement with another organization of the United Nations family or another organization.

58 . The actual review is conducted by the Appointment and Placement Committee which, after having taken all factors into account, i.e. skills, experience, aspirations of staff, post requirements and organizational needs, makes recommendations for reassignments.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

59 . The findings of this report reveal that the United Nations Secretariat has no coherent personnel policy for rotating its staff and that rotation has taken place until now, mainly on an ad hoc basis. As recently as 1986, the Organization started a "Vacancy Management and Redeployment" programme, primarily to deal with the consequence of the financial crisis which forced a reduction of staff and a freeze on recruitment. Through the Vacancy Management System attempts have been made to take advantage of the situation and redeploy staff to different duty stations. But the problem of staff rotation as such remains unsolved for the United Nations Secretariat and, in particular, for the four regional commissions which cover the developing countries.

60 . The Inspector is convinced that the staffing of the regional commissions will be handled better if the United Nations adopted a formal personnel policy that included a high factor of mobility, similar to those applied by UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, organizations which, like the commissions, are also field oriented. He also believes that in addition to establishing a formal rotation policy, further improvement in existing incentive measures could help to encourage staff members to accept assignments to the field and in particular to hardship duty stations.

61 . The Inspector proposes the following measures which may contribute to the development and implementation of a comprehensive rotation plan which is being prepared by the Office of Human Resources Management. He also believes that the plan must harmonize a career development system with a staff rotation plan in order to motivate staff members to accept assignments to hardship duty stations. In the light of the findings of the report, the Inspector makes the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Secretary-General should strengthen Staff Regulation 1.2 by establishing a formal rotation policy that clearly defines the responsibilities and obligations of staff members and those of the Organization, including patterns of assignment, job security and promotion, procedures to be used, etc. He should also accept the career development process as the most effective motivating force in staff mobility and take measures to benefit from such process.

/...

RECOMMENDATION 2:

a) For the purpose of rotating staff the following three broad occupational categories may be identified whereby staff members from Headquarters and field duty stations performing tasks within each category should be interchangeably assigned to the appropriate duty stations:

(i) Identical occupational groups;
(ii) Similar occupational groups;
(iii) Related occupational groups.

b) Following the identification of the posts which are eligible for rotation, profiles should be made of professional staff in the same occupational groups, taking into account length of service at the same duty stations.

c) The concept of identical occupational groups could constitute an experimental starting point for a rotation programme. For instance, Chief and Deputy Chiefs of Administration, Chiefs of Personnel and personnel of this section, Chief of General Services Section and personnel, Chief of Conference Services Section and personnel, Chief of Translation and translators could be easily interchanged through reassignments.

d) Staff members outside the occupational group should be considered for assignment only in cases where qualified candidates are not available from within the occupational group.

The above occupational categories are recommended to enable parallel staff in Headquarters and regional commissions rotate within their fields of specialization. This approach is expected to favour the regional commissions.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The Secretary-General should assign to a specific office, within the structure of the Office of Human Resources Management, the responsibility of managing and implementing the policy governing staff rotation.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

The movement of staff from one duty station to another in accordance with Staff Rule 101.4, either by assignment for a fixed period of time or transfer for an indefinite period, has created insecurity for staff members transferred to the field without a guarantee of returning to a suitable job at Headquarters or other duty stations. The practice of assignment for a fixed period of time should, therefore, be used preferably in favour of transfer for an indefinite duration.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

In addition to existing incentives encouraging staff members to accept assignments at hardship duty stations, the following suggestions might be taken into account in relation to staff rotation:

(a) A staff member assigned to the field from Headquarters should be granted a Special Post Allowance (SPA) immediately instead of having to wait six months as at present.

(b) Once a staff member is selected to fill a higher post in the field, promotion should occur within six months, making a differentiation in the implementation date of those going to difficult or hardship duty stations, provided they have met all the requirements mentioned in his/her letter of assignment.

(c) The effects and results of the incentive for mobility approved by General Assembly resolution 44/30 should be reviewed from time to time by the Secretariat and adjusted as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

In order to minimize the problem of job loss by spouses assigned to field duty stations, in particular to hardship duty stations, the Secretary-General should make efforts:

a) to accommodate both partners in their respective careers in the same duty station, ensuring that there is no direct reporting relationship;

b) when the Secretariat is unable to accommodate both spouses, efforts should be made to secure placement with another United Nations family organization or another organization.

Table 1: Movement of Staff Between Headquarters and the Regional Commissions

Regional Commissions	Movement to	Movement out	Net gain
HEADQUARTERS	34	32	+2
ECE	3	1	2
ESCAP	8	7	1
ECLAC	6	5	1
ECA	7	11	-4
ESCWA	10	8	2

Source: Headquarters

Table 2: Vacancy rates of the Regional Commissions for posts in the Professional category and above 1985-1990

Organi-zations	RB Estab-lished posts	1985 %	1986 %	1987 %	1988 %	1989 %	1990 %
ECE	128	7.0	11.7	19.5	18.8	13.5	1.5
ESCAP	201	5.6	13.9	18.8	18.4	10.3	7.1
ECLAC	201	6.2	28.1	29.4	28.1	12.7	2.6
ECA	226	6.8	21.2	24.8	22.1	15.3	13.5
ESCWA	108	27.8	26.2	29.6	26.8	18.2	5.6

Source: A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1.

Table 3: Distribution of Staff Among Duty Stations and Headquarters by Occupational Groups in the Field of EDP, LEG, LIB, POL, PUB

Duty Stations	EDP	LEG	LIB	POL	PUB
Santiago	5	1	2	0	2
Addis Ababa	0	0	2	0	0
Baghdad	2	0	0	2	0
Nairobi	0	0	1	1	1
Bangkok	4	0	3	1	0
Vienna	1	13	1	1	0
Geneva	30	7	17	51	9
New York	58	57	58	193	34

Table 4: Distribution of Staff Among Duty Stations and Headquarters by Occupational Groups in the Field of ADM, ECO, ENG, FIN, LNG, INF, SCI, SOC, STC.

Duty Stations	ADM	ECO	ENG	FIN	LNG	INF	SCI	SOC	STC
Santiago	16	41	2	1	7	1	3	14	5
Addis Ababa	41	69	2	4	16	1	4	14	9
Baghdad	15	33	4	1	7	1	0	11	4
Nairobi	29	1	17	7	10	2	0	0	1
Bangkok	29	66	2	4	23	4	3	11	7
Vienna	19	0	0	1	15	7	2	61	0
Geneva	127	219	5	13	274	14	8	2	17
New York	344	137	8	84	548	151	17	45	39

Source: Headquarters

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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

Rotation of staff within the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Annex, page 6, paragraph 21 and page 19, Recommendation 5 (c)

For resolution 44/30 read resolution 44/198

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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

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Rotation of staff within the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly his comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Rotation of staff within the United Nations" (A/46/326 and Corr.1).

Addendum

Comments of the Secretary-General

Introduction

1. The report deals with an important component of the human resources management system within the United Nations and contains a number of plausible recommendations most of which, with further review and refinement, would assist in setting the parameters within which a viable staff rotation system would be developed. Particularly important is the Inspector's first recommendation which reinforces the need to establish a staff rotation mechanism as an integral part of a career development system.

2. However, there are significant differences between the operational requirements of the Secretariat of the United Nations and those of the three specialized organizations - UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF - on whose rotation policies the Inspector has commented. All three are essentially field-oriented, with the structure and functions of each field office essentially duplicating those of the others, with variations in size and programme requirements. One UNICEF country programme is much like another, adapted to local and regional conditions. Staff rotation, under these circumstances, is a matter of devising incentives and opportunities to move and of adopting policies requiring movement every few years.

3. Relatively few of the jobs in the Secretariat are interchangeable in the same way as in those of the field organizations. As the Inspector notes in paragraph 16, 95 per cent of the jobs in the areas of electronic data processing (EDP), legal, library, politics, and publication are in New York, Geneva and Vienna. It would be neither economically feasible nor practical to decentralize most of these functions, and staff whose specialities are in these occupations cannot have the same rotation opportunities as the more generalist occupations, such as administration, finance, economics. A comprehensive and compulsory rotation policy applying to virtually all operational staff, such as practised by UNHCR or UNICEF, is simply not feasible given the diversity of functions required of the Secretariat and the location at Headquarters duty stations of the major General Assembly and conference-servicing operations.

4. Although the report notes that the distribution of staff among the regional commissions and Headquarters in certain occupations (EDP, LEG, LIB, POL, and PUB) "is inequitable" it does not discuss the reasons why this is so. The regional commissions are economic commissions; their mandates, established by the Economic and Social Council, are all exclusively in the area of promoting socio-economic development and regional economic cooperation. They require economists, engineers, scientists - the occupational groups that already are widely dispersed and that the report notes "are expected to cause less problems in staff rotation". Their need for lawyers, political scientists, publishing and library specialists are minimal.

5. The main objectives of any rotation policy is to expose staff to the wide range of conditions and circumstances in which the Organization operates, to broaden experience and to fill vacancies in challenging locations, in order to implement the economic, social and humanitarian programmes of the United Nations. Where functions are interchangeable, rotation is appropriate. Where the functional requirements of the particular programme are highly specialized or location-specific, rotation is not appropriate.

Omissions

6. The report omits mention of the Secretariat's major programme of entitlement specifically designed to encouraging mobility, the Mobility and Hardship Allowance, which became effective 1 July 1990. This programme assigns percentage points on a matrix to staff who have been reassigned to different duty stations, with progressively higher percentages depending on the hardship level of the duty station. 1/ The report also omits mention of the various special entitlements offered to staff serving at hardship duty stations, such as accelerated home leave, special shipment entitlements, additional education grant travel and additional reimbursement of boarding costs. These special entitlements are listed in ST/AI/280, which is revised periodically to indicate changes in the hardship level of various duty stations.

7. The report would have benefited from a fuller examination of the financial implications of a comprehensive rotation policy versus the present incentive-based system.

8. The report does not explore the obstacles to mobility between members of the common system. Given the very different mandates of the United Nations Secretariat and those of the field-oriented agencies which practise rotation, movement between organizations may be the only route available for certain occupational groups.

Vacancy situation

9. The report is quite correct in recognizing that the vacancy situation at regional commissions is no longer an issue. This can indeed be demonstrated further by the vacancy position as at 31 August 1991 depicted in table 1. As can be observed, at ECA, despite its recent evacuation, the vacancy rate is below 10 per cent. The high vacancy level at ESCWA is probably caused by its peculiar situation. This is expected to drop once the situation stabilizes.

Table 1

Vacancy rates of Headquarters and regional commissions for posts in the Professional category as at 31 August 1991

Organization	RB established posts	Vacant posts	Vacancy rate (%)
Headquarters	1 894	102	5.39
ECE	114	4	3.51
ESCAP	182	8	4.40
ECLAC	176	2	1.14
ECA (31/3/91)	214	17	7.94
ESCWA (31/1/91)	98	17	17.35

Career development

10. The Inspector's mentioning of efforts being made by the Office of Human Resources Management towards the establishment of a comprehensive career development system of all staff is appreciated. A career development system is a component of an integrated personnel management system aimed at developing a versatile and mobile staff to enable the United Nations to effectively discharge its mandates while at the same time providing rewarding and satisfying careers to staff. The system places a premium on people. To attain this goal, a number of sub-systems are being developed or upgraded to reflect up-to-date management practices. Efforts towards this include current reviews of the appraisal system and the promotion policy, systematic training of supervisors, and the development of a career counselling system. It is the intention of the Administration to integrate the concept of staff mobility into these proposals.

Recommendations

11. Recommendation 5 (a) is that staff members assigned "to the field from Headquarters should be granted a special post allowance (SPA) immediately instead of having to wait six months as at present". Limiting an immediate SPA to those assigned "from Headquarters" seems too restrictive: what about those assigned from one duty station to another where living conditions are harsher? At the same time "to the field" seems too broad: conditions vary enormously in the field. At present, ST/AI/338/Add.5 of 2 November 1988 provides that staff members selected for a higher-level post at a type III

duty station are granted an SPA immediately upon moving to that post. Also PD/1/84/Rev.1, of 28 September 1990, provides that an SPA is payable after three months in a higher-level post, not six months as the report indicates.

12. Recommendation 5 (b) is that staff selected to a higher-level post "in the field" should be promoted within six months, the implementation date differing for difficult or hardship duty stations, "provided they have met all the requirements mentioned in his/her letter of assignment" (sic). This criterion is rather vague. If the Inspector means the requirements of the job description, it does not allow for performance. The present provision, for type III duty stations, is an immediate special post allowance followed by a review for promotion at six months, which is more consistent with staff regulation 4.2.

13. Recommendation 5 (c) again refers to General Assembly resolution 44/30, which has nothing to do with incentive for mobility.

14. Recommendation 3 (and also para. 31) is to create a special unit within OHRM, with appropriate personnel and financial resources, to manage and implement the policy governing rotation. Creating a further bureaucratic structure could have the effect of making even more cumbersome the recruitment and promotion operations which, as the report notes, are already the "most time-consuming responsibilities of the Office of Human Resources Management".

Conclusion

15. As indicated earlier, the report highlights a number of important issues, some of which are already in our plans of action. Staff rotation is an important personnel management policy. If it is well conceived and implemented with consistency, it could be a powerful tool for staff motivation. However, if it is ill-conceived it may acquire the rigidity that would turn it into an abhorred and discredited instrument. The work in progress is aimed at setting up a system with built-in flexibility.

Notes

1/ Para. 21 of the report says that the General Assembly, in its resolution 44/30, "approved an important number of measures and incentives for staff servicing in hardship areas". Resolution 44/30 was about the "progressive development of the principles and norms of international law relating to the new international economic order". Possibly the Inspector meant resolution 44/198 E, in which the General Assembly approved the introduction of the mobility and hardship allowance along with some other recommendation of ICSC.